

9/20/05

To whom it may concern,

My name is Shaunna Taylor, and I witness the fatal crossing of the Sydney Mae 2 across the Umpqua River bar on 9/19/05 at around 8:20p.m. Here is my statement on the following event.

Casey Howard, Alisha Beck and I were driving home from North Bend/ Coos Bay area and passed the viewing point on top on Winchester Bay hill, before you get to the light house road, and Casey noticed white on the bar. This struck our interest to observe the bar. When we reached the light house and parked around 5:00 pm, we saw at least four or five rows of 14 to 15 ft. sluffing breaks in the south hole. We discussed the conditions and decided it would be best to cancel our morning trip. Casey called Scott Howard, her husband, and told him to cancel our trips for the following morning, 9/20/05. At that time "Fly Boy", Jim Shrack, walked over to Casey's four runner, and started telling us that Sydney Mae 2 was still outside tuna fishing and that he was planning on coming home at tide change, which was roughly 8:00 pm, Jim went on to tell us he spoke with Sydney Pucek and offered to pick up the passengers of the Sydney Mae 2 in Charleston. We left shortly after that. On our way down the hill we decided to come back a little before 8:00 p.m to see what Rich Oba would do.

I drove to Scott and Casey's house around 6:30. We called Patrick Sullivan to see if he wanted to join us at the light house. We left the house around 7:30 to go to the light house, but before we left Reedsport we stopped and picked up Alisha from her parents house. We arrived at the light house a little before 8:00 p.m. Patrick was waiting for us when we got there. He had his VHF radio in his boat on scan, turned up loud enough to hear it clearly. There was no traffic on the radio at that time. One of us called the Coast Guard station and they said that Sydney Mae 2 was going to Charleston. With that Patrick contacted Rich Oba on the VHF. He asked Rich his position, Rich came back with "I am a mile and a half away from the U buoy." Patrick came back and said, "Well, Rich, I fished that bar all day. I saw the swell build, and it was doing some funky shit. I recommend you go to Charleston. I know it's pretty bad out there, and I would recommend you to not cross the bar." Rich told him "Oh, I saw it, it's ok for me." Patrick ended it with, "Well, ok buddy, I am at the light house, I don't know what I can do for you, but if you need anything let me know!"

We waited around and about 10 minutes later Casey, Alisha, and I saw all spotted what looked like boat lights just south of the red light. Then it disappeared and reappeared right by the red light. It seemed like the boat was moving quite fast. It disappeared a little north of the red light. From the first time I saw him to the last time I saw him was probably a matter of 30 seconds to a minute. I never saw it again. Around five minutes later I heard a loud bang. It sounded like thunder. We all looked at each other. Scott said it sounded kind of like a big breaker, Patrick said it kind of sounded like a boat crashing against the rocks. We waited probably another two minutes to see if we would hear anything else, we didn't. At that time Casey called the Umpqua Coast Guard Station, and said something along the lines of "We saw some lights and heard a loud bang. And I just wanted see how long ago you had contact with Rich Oba?" They told her that they had cell phone contact about 15 minutes ago, and he said he was going to

Charleston.”

After the phone conversation, Patrick proceeded to try and reach Rich Oba. When Patrick had called him on channel 6, 10, 16, and 22 and he didn't come back, we tried his cell phone, and it was disconnected. Then Scott spotted a strobe light south of the Jetty. It appeared to be moving at a steady speed south. That's when Patrick contacted the Coast Guard station and told them to get a boat underway right now.

That is about it. More and more people showed up at the light house and the Coast Guard did their thing. I do think that Rich Oba was crossing the bar. This is my statement if I can help in any other way please let me know.

Thank you

A large black rectangular redaction box covering the signature of Shaunna Taylor.

Shaunna Taylor